Who Was Jesus?

by

Lincoln McConnell, LL.D.

"GIVE JESUS A
SQUARE DEAL"

Who Was Jesus?

BY
LINCOLN McCONNELL, LL. D.

Price 50c Paper Cover
$1.00 Cloth Binding

GLAD TIDINGS PUBLISHING CO,
207 S. Wabash Ave.
CHICAGO

[1923]

BT303
.M215

Copyright, 1915, 1923 by
LINCOLN McCONNELL
Thomaston, Ga.

DEC -3 '23

©CIA766134

no 1

NOTE

This lecture sermon was delivered in the evangelistic campaign in Oklahoma City in 1914, and by especial request was repeated to an audience composed of men It is here given as taken by stenographers at that time.

Who Was Jesus?

Text: Matt. 22:42

"What think you of Christ? Whose Son is He?"

I am highly complimented by this great gathering. It is wonderful to see nearly six thousand men gathered to hear a discussion such as that announced for this evening. And yet, why should we wonder at it? What more interesting or important question was ever presented to a human mind than "Who was Jesus?" The real wonder is that men are not thinking and talking of this wonderful thing every day and hour. This question is as live, as important for us today, as it was to those who first heard it. Man's great need is not ethics, religion, rules for living, but LIFE! And this man Jesus says He has power to give just that unto man!

WHO WAS JESUS?

We are confronted today with what might be called a "Christless Christianity." Certainly with a religion that discounts the "supernatural" and that in large measure denies the authority of Jesus and His right to dictate the activities of life. I wonder, if He were to come today, if He would not say to many of us, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and yet do not the things I say?"

Thousands of men in our land do not indeed doubt the fact that Jesus originated Christianity, that He was a person of rare beauty of character, of wonderful works, etc., etc., but they do not see that they must accept Him as "God's Son" in any peculiar sense. It is to these men that I address myself tonight.

I do not hope to be able to answer all the questions that may have arisen in your minds, but it can at least do us no harm to think together and see if we cannot arrive at some conclusions that will be honoring to our Lord.

WHO WAS JESUS?

I believe I can get more directly at what I want to say if you will allow me to follow the line of a conversation I had a few years ago with a judge in Missouri. I was conducting a campaign similar to this in his city, and very frequently his name would be mentioned during the conferences between myself and the ministers. He was always spoken of with the greatest respect, and I soon came to learn that he was esteemed as the most influential man in the city. He seemed to be the natural leader in most charitable and moral movements, but—and here came the rub, he was an infidel! It was this fact that caused the ministers so much concern. They were constantly meeting such talk as this, "One does not have to be a Christian at all. Look at Judge Blank! Who lives a cleaner life than he?" And, indeed, he did live a beautiful life. He came to the meetings often, and always came when anything like a lecture or especial argument

was advertised. Now, I had formerly been an infidel myself, having become poisoned in my youth with infidel literature, so I felt it my duty to do all I could to help those who were similarly afflicted.

I was highly pleased one morning on receiving a note from Judge Blank expressing a desire for an interview with me. I called at his office and we had a four or five hour talk.

After the first greetings, he assured me that he had not sent for me with any thought of becoming a Christian, but for some other reasons. First, he was a lawyer, and my father had been one, while I had read law some myself; then, I had been an infidel, had read several books he had read, and, as he was called an infidel, he was naturally curious to know just why I had forsaken that belief.

I told him that I was delighted to meet him, for I fully expected him to become a Christian. This seemed to genuinely dis-

tress him, and he said, "I am sorry for that, son, for it cannot be, and will grieve me to have to disappoint you." He then took considerable trouble and time to explain to me why he could not become a Christian.

His father had been an Atheist and a member of the Freethinkers Club that had been in operation there for many years. They had most of the "illustrious" platform infidels there for lectures. His father had never allowed him to attend church or Sunday school in his youth without his going along to criticise and ridicule the teaching they heard. The son had been sent to schools run by infidels, and finally graduated at a university famous for its materialism.

"Thus you see how very far away I am from any ground on which you might expect to 'convert' me."

I asked him if he would kindly outline just what he did not believe, that, in his

opinion, placed us so widely apart, and he said, "Why, I don't suppose I believe a thing you do. I don't believe the 'Garden of Eden' story; the 'Creation' story; the 'Moses and the Law' story; the 'Jonah and the Whale' story; none of them, son, none of them!"

"Well," I replied, "I don't care a rap whether you do or not! Those things have nothing at all to do with your becoming a Christian."

"What! Do you mean to say a man can become a Christian and not believe those stories?"

"Certainly he can. The Lord never told me, 'Go ye into all the world and preach Jonah and the whale'—not at all. Now, don't misunderstand me; I believe each and every one of them myself, and the time will come when you will also, but I do not believe this makes one bit of difference just now."

"Well, I must say," he replied, "that

you are putting this matter to me in a new light already. I had always been told a fellow had to begin at the beginning and believe it all or the church didn't want him. Where would you want to start if we were to discuss this question?"

"Right here—What do you think of Jesus? Was He a person who actually lived on this earth, or was He a myth?"

"A man, of course," said the judge. "He was just as surely a living man as any man history records the life of."

"All right, Judge, we now have a common point of view, and here is what I propose. You take a sheet of that paper and give me one. We will head our papers the same, and see how far we can travel together. We will then know clearly where and why we differ, if we do." That suited him, too, and we got ready.

"Now, Judge, we will head our papers thus, 'Jesus of Nazareth was a real Person.' "

And so we started down the steps of the common history of Jesus.

We agreed that He lived some nineteen hundred years ago:

That He was the originator of Christianity:

That He found the world in a very low state morally:

That Christianity was the purest and most wholesome of all religious systems:

That every nation that accepted and honestly lived by its teachings was seen to pull away from those nations that did not:

That all individuals, also, who lived by its teachings, lived clean and wholesome lives.

In fact, he said, so sure was he that Christianity was an uplifting influence, that he sincerely wished that many he could name would embrace it, and that he hoped the present meetings would be a real success!

That was Judge Blank; the man all men believed in and loved, and it was not hard to understand why. He did not dodge anything that appeared to him to be the truth; he simply did not, and thought he could not, believe in Christianity as "Divine" in any especial sense.

"Now, Judge, we are ready for the next question: 'Whose Son was Jesus? Was He the Son of God, or the son of man?' "

"Just a man, of course—just a man," said he. "An extraordinary, a wonderful man, to be sure, but, after all, just a man—the same as other men."

"All right," I said, "I will put that down on my paper if you insist, but I do so with the understanding that you are to answer some questions I will ask you."

"That's not my job today," he smilingly replied; "you are leading this discussion."

"Not now, I am not, for you have taken it out of my hands. If you insist that Jesus was 'merely a man,' then it is up

to you to make some explanations. If you accept my answer as to who He was, then it will be my job to explain, if, indeed, the answer is not self-evident."

"Now, what you must explain is this: How did this 'mere man' do the wonders you have admitted he did do? What was and is the power behind genuine Christianity? That it has this power you do not deny, and it is up to you to explain its source. How can a 'dead Jew' exert the power we have agreed belongs to Christianity? More than that, how can a 'dead Jew' who was a fraud or a fanatic while he lived, exert any such power as this?

"This man found the world sunken in superstition, steeped in vice, and groveling in ignorance. His own people, the Jews, were at the bottom of the decline in both national and spiritual power. In bondage to Rome, they did not even have civil liberty. They were divided among

themselves. One large class denying even the fact of a future life for man, while the other, who claimed to believe in it, had become so cold and backslidden they had neither energy nor disposition to lift a hand to save themselves, while God Himself had seemingly turned His back upon them. For over four hundred years, they had had neither notable teacher nor outstanding prophet.

"It was now, when His own nation was so sunken, and when Rome was so corrupt, that Jesus came.

"And what was His reception? 'He came unto His own, and His own received Him not,' is the record! Much as they needed Him, His teaching was so pure, His light so brilliant, that the worldly, hypocritical pretenders to virtue could not stand Him, and instead of loving, they hated Him; instead of receiving, they rejected Him, and to rid themselves of Him, they had Him killed.

"Nor was His reception by the Romans any warmer. So obnoxious to the proud and haughty were His simple teachings of the way of life, that for hundreds of years, the hunting down of His followers was a national pastime.

"But, notwithstanding all this, Christianity survived its enemies, and you are today forced to admit that it is the one great force for uplift in the world."

"Now, Judge, kindly explain how this wonder was accomplished? What is the power back of it? How does this 'dead Jew,' not only dead nineteen hundred years, but scorned and rejected by the 'wise' of His time, the 'good' of His time, the 'great' of His time, as a common fanatic at best and a deceiver at worst; I say, how does it come about that this man's influence is so marvelous, so virile, even till this day? You must see that it is up to you to explain this."

And for two hours the judge tried to do

that thing. We examined every possible theory that he presented, to see if it was adequate to the task he had set for it. It would needlessly take up our time tonight to follow the windings of our path that day as he offered what at first seemed sufficient explanations, only to find them too feeble for the job.

"The enthusiasm of Jesus"; "the zeal of fanatical disciples"; "the wonderful beauty of His life"; "the inherent belief in the supernatural in man"; "the binding cohesive force of persecution"; "the power of a mighty psychic over the subjective mind in man"; "the simple purity of His teachings"; even "the sad tragedy of His untimely death," all were examined and found wanting, and the judge was forced to admit that either or all of these influences, powerful as they are, were unable to stand up under the test placed upon them. When he frankly admitted his inability to offer a "cause" for the

acknowledged "effects," I said to him:

"Now, Judge, the case is even worse than it has yet appeared against your theory, for here is another fact that must be admitted, namely: If Jesus was not the Son of God as He claimed, then He was a fraud. He was either a deliberate fraud, or an ignorant fraud. He was either knowingly deceiving those He led to believe Him Divine, or He was a hopeless fanatic who actually thought Himself Divine. Now, which was He?

"If the records we have of Him are true, He talked of Himself as having powers that God only can have; He made promises that God only can fulfill; He allowed Himself to be worshipped and prayed to, as God only should be; hence, we are compelled to accept one of three theories:

"First, He was the conscious Son of God.

"Second, He was a willful deceiver.

"Third, He was a hopeless fanatic, utterly insane!

"Now, which horn will you take? Was He a fanatic or a fraud?"

"Neither one," said the judge, "and I am sorry to have to say what I am going to say, because I do not want to hurt your feelings nor disturb your faith.

"You are simply in the common rut of error that the church is in, in regard to this matter. You are acting on the assumption that you have the actual record of what Jesus said and did, when the fact is, you have no such thing.

"The records you believe to be true are inventions. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were not witnesses to the words and deeds of Jesus at all.

"These books were written many years after His death, and are simply a compilation of stories and fables about what Jesus was said to have said and done, and they

have long ago been shown to be unworthy of credence.

"No really intelligent man today, except those who, because of their worshipful attitude toward these books, are unable to see the truth; I say no unbiased men today believe these books are records of the sayings and doings of Jesus.

"Jesus was a great and good man, but too much is attributed to him by his blind followers. I have no idea he ever said a foolish thing about himself or made a foolish claim for Himself. His character is too fine to admit of any such opinion of Him. So you see, my son, I do not have to accept either of your 'horns.' He was neither a fraud nor a fanatic, and He certainly never claimed to be a God," said the judge.

"So you do not think 'unbiased, intelligent men' hold the church opinion? Did you ever hear of Simon Greenleaf?"

"You mean Greenleaf, the teacher of law?" he asked.

"Yes, Simon Greenleaf, the man who wrote books on evidence, who taught lawyers."

"Certainly, I have his books and have known him for many years. Why?"

"Have you ever read his book called 'The Testimony of the Evangelists'"? I asked.

"No, I did not know he had ever written any such book! When was it? Tell me about it," he said. And I told him about Simon Greenleaf's book.

It may not be amiss here for me to repeat a part of what I said to him. But first allow me to say, that Simon Greenleaf is commonly accepted as a great teacher of legal principles. His work, "A Treatise on the Law of Evidence," is standard, and is recognized in all courts. He was a professor of law at Harvard University. In his great work, "The Tes-

timony of the Evangelists," he says he is attempting to "examine these books by the rules of evidence admitted in our courts of justice," and his conclusions are that "their testimony about Jesus must be accepted as true." His book is addressed to the "Members of the Legal Profession," and in that he says:

"Things related by the Evangelists are certainly of the most momentous character, affecting the principles of our conduct here, and our happiness hereafter. The religion of Jesus Christ aims at nothing less than the utter overthrow of other systems of religion in the world, denouncing them as inadequate to the wants of man, false in their foundations and dangerous in their tendencies. If these claims are not true, they are little less than the pretensions of a bold imposture, which, not satisfied with having already enslaved millions of the human race, seeks to continue its encroachments on human liberty until all

nations shall be subjugated under its iron rule. But if they are well founded and just, then they can be no less than the high requirements of heaven, addressed by the voice of God to the reason and understanding of man, concerning things deeply affecting his relations to his Sovereign, essential to the formation of his character, and of course, to his destiny both here and hereafter."

It was in this solemn spirit, and with these words and this consciousness of the results of his inquiry, that this great teacher approached the examination of these ancient documents.

In paragraph 8, he says, "And that the text of the four Evangelists has been handed down to us in the state in which it was originally written, that is, without having been materially corrupted or falsified, are facts which we are entitled to assume as true until the contrary is shown. The genuineness of these writings really

admits of as little doubt, and is as susceptible of as ready proof, as that of any ancient writings whatever. The rule of municipal law on the subject applies with equal force to all ancient writings, whether documentary or otherwise." Here he gives the rule of law.

"Every document, apparently ancient, coming from the proper repository and bearing on its face no evident marks of forgery, the law presumes to be genuine, and devolves on the opposing party of proving it to be otherwise."

Having laid down these rules of evidence, Greenleaf proceeds most carefully to examine the testimony of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, subjecting them to the most exacting compliance with the rules of evidence in common law, among others being "The credit due the testimony of witnesses depends upon: First, their honesty; second, their ability; third, their number and consistency of their tes-

timony; fourth, the conformity of their testimony with experience; and fifth, the coincidence of their testimony with collateral evidence." Thus, this man examined these witnesses and no man can read this great work without being struck with the breadth of his research, the depth of his learning, the strength of his mind, his absolute sincerity in his search after the truth. And here are his sober conclusions:

"Either the men of Gallilee were men of superlative wisdom, extensive knowledge and experience, and of deeper skill in the arts of deception than any and all men before or after them; or, they have truly stated the astonishing things which they saw and heard."

He then gives in full, as a lawyer would, the testimony of these four witnesses, and he gives it as we have it. In addition to this, he gives much space to an examina-

tion of the various stories of contradictory manuscripts, etc.

"Now, Judge, you must face a square question. What authority have you for your assertion that 'Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are not credible witnesses of what Jesus said and did?' Who, as you asserted, 'investigated these books and proved them inventions, gotten up long after Jesus had died, and who attributed to Him things He never said nor taught about Himself'? I have the right to demand your authority for such bold statements. Kindly give them to me!"

And Judge Blank was ' up a tree.' Being an honest man, he found himself face to face with a demand that he had no disposition to dodge, and with a question that left him without an answer. He searched his memory for his 'authority.' He started to mention several names of men whose books he had read, and who asserted these same things, but each time he felt com-

pelled to acknowledge that they were far from being 'authority.' They were men, who, just like himself, had believed what they had been told about these things and who, no more than he, had ever 'examined and disproved' these books at all.

After some moments of confusion, he faced the truth squarely and said, "I simply haven't any! All my life I have been told these things about these books. The men whom I have accepted as my teachers asserted and believed these things about them, hundreds of books repeat these bold statements concerning them, but as for any of them being worthy to be called an 'authority' alongside of Simon Greenleaf, I am compelled to acknowledge they are not."

This honest man had not intended to do violence to the truth, but he had simply failed to keep track of the rules of evidence when he heard derogatory things said about these old books. I now began

to see why he was spoken of as "an honest man." He looked straight at me and said, "I am ready to hear your case, Mr. Attorney, and I will do my best to give due consideration to what you have to offer."

"Then let us look at this evidence as presented by the Evangelists. Now, what do these men say about Jesus? What do they say that He said and taught about Himself? We are forced to take Him at His own estimate, or, believe Him a fraud, trying to deceive. He cannot be considered a 'good, wise man,' and, at the same time, be an 'ignorant fraud,' trying to induce people to believe untruths about Him. This is not possible. So we are forced to the conclusion that He was either one of three things: First, what He said He was, the Son of God. Second, totally deceived about Himself, and hence a dangerous fanatic; or, Third, a deliberate liar.

He was either one or the other, for he allows us no other opinion.

"Now, what do the witnesses say He said about Himself? Listen to Him; He said that He 'came down from heaven' (John 3:13); that He 'was before Abraham' (John 8:58); that He had 'glory with the Father before the world was' (John 17:5); that He had 'power on earth to forgive sins' (Mark 2:15-10, Luke 7:48); that He could and would 'give eternal life that men should not perish' (John 10:28); that 'no man could come unto God but by Him' (John 14:6); that God had 'committed all judgment unto Him' (John 5:22, 23); that He 'could and would raise the dead' (John 6:39, 44); that He Himself would 'rise from the dead' (John 2:18, 22), and that he 'would come again to rule the earth' (Mark 14:61, 62).

"These and many other things they testify that He said about Himself. Could

a 'mere man' have made any such claims and not be a hopeless fanatic, or an utter liar? Would any mere man making such claims be considered a safe leader, or a wise teacher?

" 'But,' you say, 'these are things taught about Him by ignorant followers, and He was not responsible for them.' But where do you get any information at all about Him? Is it not from these same 'ignorant followers'? They are the ones who tell us about the wonderful life of this wonderful man; and it is strange indeed if they are such hopeless liars in some places, and writers of such wonderful revelations in others; that they should present to the old world this white light, this pure ray, and at the same time so surround it with such black and hurtful untruths!

"Now let us see whether they themselves believe their own stories. What did they themselves believe and teach others to believe about Him? You say 'He was

a mere man.' They say they saw Him raise the dead (John 11:34); heal lepers (Matt. 8:3); still stormy waves (Matt. 8:26); cast out devils (Mark 5); die on the cross (Matt. 27:50); rise from the dead (Matt. 28), and ascend into heaven (Luke 25:51). Now, those things are either true or they are false. It is certainly true that those who lived near the time of Christ had a much better chance to know what was really thought and believed of Him, what He taught, said, and did, and what His disciples taught about Him, than we of this far away day.

"Now look what the early church thought about Him. They thought Him sent of God (Rom. 6, 7, 8; John 1, 14; Heb. 2:9-16); that He could atone for sin (1 Cor. 15:3); that He was worthy of worship (Phil. 2:4-11); that He arose from the grave (Acts 17:3); that He was man's hope of life (Rom. 6:23; 1st John 5:11-12); and that He was coming again,

etc. (1st Thess. 4:16-18). Now, this is what the early church believed about this Jesus, whom you think a 'mere man.' You admit that He founded that church, but you think it believed things about Him that were not true. You do not deny either the fact of the early church nor His being its founder.

"Now, you must realize that it is up to you to explain this Christianity. If He were a mere man, it is the enigma of all time. Wherein lies its wonderful power, its virility, its transforming energy? It has revolutionized the world, as you will admit. Eighteen hundred years ago the world was pagan. Today the best of it is Christian. Those nations that have embraced this religion, believing this Jew to be the Son of God, have been seen to draw away from those that did not, to become enlightened, civilized, cleaner, more humane, superstitions dissolved and their minds liberated.

WHO WAS JESUS?

"While every nation that refused Him, or accepting, forsook Him, has either remained in darkness, or disappeared from the earth. How do you account for these things? These people who have come up have done so believing that a 'mere man' was a God! That He had the power to forgive their sins, and help them in their inner being, that He would give them eternal life! They were, of course, grossly superstitious, if you are right. Yet their superstitions have never failed to be a benefit to them, to prove a blessing to them. Somehow, believing lies has had the strange power to make them want to quit lying! Believing fables has some way liberated them from superstitions! This is an absolute reversal of all other human observations and experiences! It is a 'riddle' inserted into the history of man and it is up to you who believe it to explain it.

"Now, Judge, here are a few common laws, or rules, that may help us in this matter. For instance, it has been commonly supposed that 'there must be an adequate cause for every effect,' that 'like begets like,' and that 'no stream can rise higher than its source.' Do you really believe that this Christianity that has changed the map of the world, that has so vitally affected the lives of men as you know it has, can be accounted for on the hypothesis that men are deceived into believing a dead Jew, one that has now been dead for over eighteen hundred years, was in reality alive, and that a 'mere man' was in reality a 'God'? Can you believe the world would have been so affected by the mere belief in such a tissue of lies and untruths?

"Now we must not lose sight of the fact that the men who claim to be Christians, claim also that they have received an actual change in their natures, an actual experi-

ence, a change in their affections, desires, hopes and fears! Is it fair or safe to assume that these men, whose word is taken every day in other matters of personal experience, have suddenly become unworthy of belief, now that they are testifying to a matter that you happen to know nothing about?

"I do not believe, Judge, that any man can account for human history, the marvelous changes that have come to men whose after lives have so vitally affected this world, on any other hypothesis than that men can be 'converted' as Christians claim. I do not mean a mere change of opinion about self and God, but an actual 'regeneration,' 'transformation,' 'new birth,' as the Bible says, and as men testify to having experienced. It would take too much time, even if it were needful, to name such men, for their name is legion, and every age since the time of Christ has

heard their testimony and witnessed their lives.

"Without exception, these Christian men assert that these 'effects' were caused, not by a mere opinion concerning Jesus (many of them all their lives did not even doubt His divinity), but through the mighty power of God when they accepted this Jesus as the Lord of their lives, the Son of God.

"You cannot dodge or evade these 'effects,' for they are facts and must be accounted for; and it is up to you to account for them on your hypothesis that Jesus was a 'mere man.' Every effect must have an adequate cause. If a stick should be thrust through that hole (a hole in the floor) and you should stand on it and be lifted up and down by it and I should ask: 'What is that under there lifting you so easily?' You would not think to deceive me by replying, 'Oh, that's merely a little grandson playing by push-

ing the stick through the hole.' You know I would not believe any child had the power to juggle a man of your size up and down in that manner. And yet something has caused you to believe that for over eighteen hundred years a dead Jew has juggled a world up and down on the end of a lie!

"Take the second rule mentioned, 'Like begets like.' This is supposed to operate in all realms. I ask you if, in any other department of life or any other realms, man has ever seen what you think you see here? Nothing short of absolute reversal of this law!

"You admit that genuine Christians are sincere, upright, pure in life, honest, etc., etc. You admit that many who were a while ago just the reverse of this show these traits now, and you hear them attribute this change to Christ and their faith in His Divinity. And yet, you seem to believe that here 'truth' was begotten by

'falsehood'; that 'sincerity' was begotten by 'deception'; 'honesty' was begotten by 'cheating'; 'knowledge' was begotten by 'superstition'; 'beautiful characters and holy lives' were begotten by 'false teachings'!

"Then take the third rule of law, 'No stream can rise higher than its source.' You admit that eighteen hundred years ago, there came into this world a 'stream' of purity of teaching, and beauty of living, that has had an uplifting effect on men. It has done more than that. It has lifted men to God! Whence came that stream? What was its true 'source'?"

And thus we talked for a long time, and the judge was free to admit that he could not explain many things, or answer many questions presented.

"But," he said, "while I cannot explain these things at all, it is impossible for me to believe the other hypothesis; I simply could not believe that Jesus was 'divinely

begotten' without the intervention of a male! This is to me unreasonable, unnatural, unscientific. It contradicts all natural law. Why do you so insist on this belief in the supernatural? Why can a man not be a Christian, as many believe, and leave that out?"

"Because," I replied, "the only grounds that I know of for any man's becoming a Christian at all, are those set forth in the Bible, and the Bible most clearly says that belief in the supernatural Christ, and in the work He did, are the grounds for man's redemption. The death and resurrection of Jesus are the Bible grounds for our hope; not His teachings, ethics, beautiful life or anything of the sort. Please do not overlook this truth. We have come today to a time when an emasculated, powerless 'gospel' is offered to man. When the changes are rung on the 'beautiful life' of Jesus, etc., etc., and we are told that we should 'imitate Him,' etc.

"To be sure, we should follow Him, imitate Him, study His beautiful life, etc., but if this is all we have, we are without hope. If He were a mere man, He had no power to die for my sins, to rise again, or to raise me again. I need a Savior more powerful than any 'mere man' could ever be. I have a past that needs blotting out, and the Bible teaches that 'the blood of Jesus' was shed to do that for me. I have a weak mind, and an imperfect judgment, I need a teacher and guide, and the Bible offers Jesus as my Lord for that purpose. I need peace with God, and an advocate with God to plead my case at the Court on high. Christ is my advocate, ever living to intercede for me. I need power superior to any I naturally ever had, if I would win in the fight against Satan; and Christ sends down the Holy Ghost to empower for victory in the battles of life! No, Judge, a 'mere man' could not save me or enable me to save myself. And in

this I am not alone, for listen to Saint Paul: 'If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised Christ up, and if Christ be not raised, **your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins.** Then are they also which are fallen asleep in Christ, perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most miserable.' (1st Cor. 15:15-19.)

"And this agrees with the whole of the New Testament and this is what we must insist on. We must either accept Jesus thus as the Son of God, or reject Him as an impostor. There can be no middle ground if we accept the testimony of the witness to the truth given the early church. Thus you see the early church was founded on the faith that the man of Galilee was the Son of God, that He died for man's sins; rose again, etc.; that He

came to give men life, not mere instruction; life, not mere ideas about life; life, not example alone.

"These things are either true or they are false, and if one thinks himself a 'Christian' merely because he admires Jesus, sees beauty in His character, tries to imitate Him, etc., he is certainly mistaken, if these men who lived and taught in the time of Christ Himself are to be believed and followed.

"Now, Judge, you have said the 'divine conception was unnatural, unscientific, violated all natural law,' etc. Allow me to ask you, do you think you know all natural law?"

"I do not claim to do so; why do you ask that?" he said.

"But are you not as good as doing so when you assert that 'divine conception contradicts all natural law'? If you do not know all natural law, how can you be so certain? You also say it is 'unscientific.'

What science do you have in mind, the science of what age and time? There has been that which was called a science in every age perhaps, but very little of the 'scientific knowledge' of the ages back of us is considered worthy of attention today. You are certainly not a blind worshipper at the feet of 'science,' I trust.

"Do not misunderstand me. I am not casting slurs at the learning of men. I am amazed more and more every day at the vast knowledge really possessed by man. But have we not many times had to listen to the 'opinions' of those supposedly wise, on subjects that they had no better chance to know about than we ourselves?

"Many of the deductions of scientists have been proven to be not even good guessing, much less accurate information.

"Suppose a few years ago some man had said that 'the time will come when we can live for hours under the sea; fly for hours in the air; talk to others thousands

of miles distant; make sounds of instruments stay for years on a metal or rubber disk, and be given forth at will! ponderous bodies be moved and lifted by an invisible power, etc. Suppose someone had said that these things had been 'foretold in a book accredited by a church,' what would the wise men have said? The mere fact that an axe head was said on one occasion to swim; two men to walk on the water, and another to live three days in a whale's belly, in Bible times, has been enough to cause many 'scientists' to feel sure they would belittle themselves to believe such a book!

"I have a friend in Missouri who spent some years in the service of Professor Roentgen, the German who discovered the X-Ray or Roentgen ray. My friend says that this German doctor knew something about that strange light for some years before he dared say anything about it publicly. In those days, science said

that 'light cannot penetrate opaque substances.' Roentgen was one day in a dark room, developing some photographic plates, when there came a sudden flash of that strange light into the room. He knew it must be electric and he knew the only electrical impulses being generated in his place were from a static machine some distance away with which an assistant was operating. He looked into it and found his man doing something with a static machine and an old fashioned Crookes tube. They went to work at it with this new thought in mind, and by changing the tube, etc., somewhat, he at last got it perfected. There was a gathering of scientists, and he read his paper telling of his discovery, and you know the sensation it awakened. To be sure, many of the wise men smiled and doubted, but when they placed the hoods over their eyes, put their hands out in front and that machine was started, they saw their bones wiggle for

the first time, and knew that there were a few things that even they had not suspected. (I suspect if it was thought that I had a moral X-ray machine here in Oklahoma City, a lot of you fellows wouldn't be here tonight, and the trains toward Texas would have done a good business these past weeks.)

"So you see, Judge, we are almost daily learning new facts about the world in which we live, its laws, etc. We have about come to the place where we are not willing to dispute anything, or deny any possibilities, so often have we found ourselves denying facts. Indeed, we daily witness things that seem really as 'marvelous' as the miracles that astounded the people in Jesus' time. To limit the operation of natural law to our own experiences and observations is now seen to be a foolish performance, though we often see it when it comes to religious discussion. 'It cannot be true,' men assert, merely be-

cause they happen to know nothing about it."

"But you do not mean to claim that this can have any bearing on the matter we are discussing, the so-called "divine conception'?" he asked.

"I most assuredly do," I replied. "I assert that the Bible teaches, and it is my belief, that not only was the 'conception' of Jesus Divine, but that ALL conception was also Divine!"

"I suppose, Judge, that you are an evolutionist?" He said he was.

"All right, I have no disposition to quarrel with you on that, as it makes no difference here. I suppose you would start the world building along back in the 'star dust' period?" He said that was about as far back as his imagination could go, so I proceeded to outline roughly the changes that might have taken place, and to which he agreed, thus:

"Away back, an unthinkable number of

ages ago, what we now know as 'matter' was in a very different form. It was a nebulous 'sun dust' or 'star dust,' floating in space. Then at some given time—we cannot even surmise when—there came into this dust certain 'laws' that were not there before. The first was likely the law of motion. It began to move, to revolve. The second, we'll say, was the law of gravity.

"And right here we must pass over another 'mystery' and not even ask, 'What is gravity?' What gives matter the strange power to attract other matter, to hold it so firmly? With no contact, no connecting media, other than this strange 'law,' matter reaches across space and grips other matter! We had better pass that.

"Another of these 'laws' was that we call 'affinity.'

"This nebulous dust began to move, to revolve round and round, drawn ever closer by the 'law' of gravity, until, by

virtue of the other 'laws' found within it, it began to change form and appearance. It changed from dust to gas, from gas to liquid, from liquid to solid, whirling, cooling, until at last its outer surface was cool enough for life to exist upon it. Of course, you see that we are making no effort to give anything but the vaguest outline, and that neither particularly accurate nor in technical language. We are speaking from the simple point of view of an ordinary man, had he witnessed these mighty processes, and as they would have appeared to his eye, that's all."

"That's all right," said the judge, "I have no quarrel with your outline so far, but where does this bring us?"

"It brings us out squarely where the Bible begins," I replied.

"That book says, 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and the earth was without form,' etc. There is no hint how long ago that creation took place,

nor the processes God instituted to bring the needed changes to pass. It is just as rational to suppose that processes were carried out in bringing the earth to its present form, as it is to believe that living organisms develop from primary germ to ultimate form. Had a man been privileged to witness these mighty changes, how else could he have told of them than in the language of the senses, or as they appeared to his eye?

"If you complain that the language of the Bible is not 'scientific,' you forget that the 'scientific' terminology of the day is of but recent origin, and is understood by very few of the earth's inhabitants, while the great truths of the Word were given for all men everywhere. The marvel is, that they are so told as to convey clear impressions to the mind of both the ignorant and the learned. But let us get back to where we left off.

"The earth at some time came into a

state where life was possible on it, and THAT LIFE CAME.

"Now the question is, where did these life germs come from?

"How did the marvelous germs of life, the antecedents of the myriad forms of life that people this earth, originate?

"I care little whether you believe all life sprang from one parent cell, or whether you believe, as I do, that each species was, as now, always separate. Certainly the same 'cause' which produced one germ could produce others. Nature does not now produce but a single specimen of any living thing—so why should we assume it ever did? If you believe in the 'single cell' idea, you are forced to believe more about that cell than I can possibly believe. You are forced by the logic of the case to believe that every characteristic, every tendency, every power, every function possessed or manifested by every living thing

today were wrapped up in that one life germ!

"It is beyond me to believe that any such potentialities were in a single germ, but that does not matter. Our question is, 'Whence life on this earth?'

"Now, there are only three possible hypotheses:

"First: These life germs were coexistent with matter and were therefore always in that 'dust,' 'gas,' liquid flaming mass, etc. Do you believe that? You certainly do not, as you could not if you would.

"Second: Do you believe these life germs were 'spontaneously generated,' sprang from the dust, or the sea, were merely the result of certain chemical combinations or conditions?"

The judge hastened to disclaim any such belief, for he did not belong to the class of ignorant people who swallow the trash handed out by yellow journals that continually report some 'great scientist'

as being on the eve of discovering the secret of life, and how to create it, etc. Judge Blank had kept up with the experiments of such men as Pasteur, who exhausted every effort to produce life from dead matter, and he knew that no axiom in the scientific world was more firmly established than this, "Life comes only from life." The law of "Biogenesis" is as well established as the law of gravity.

"Third: This brings us squarely out on the Bible explanation, that of DIVINE CONCEPTION!

"If life germs were not eternal, and always in the parent matter; if they were not spontaneously generated; then there is but one thing left for us to believe, and that is CREATION! They were created by a Creator capable of giving them their powers, and put here!

"The Bible says that God is just as truly the Author of all life as He is of Christ's life. And while this is, to be sure, far

beyond our 'understanding,' are we not also faced on every turn with myriad facts that are as wholly beyond our 'understanding'? We simply know nothing about the mystery of life, and we may never know, but we know the facts of its reality and, as sane people, we go on our way in its enjoyment.

"In the fullness of time, God, the Creator of matter, the Author of its 'laws,' the One who set the limits to its possibilities, that God created life. And just as matter differs in its properties, so do life germs differ in their powers. Just as boundaries were set for matter and it is confined by 'law,' so did God set boundaries for each species of life and so limit its functions. It was held by the immutable law of its God. It could correspond with its environment to the limit of its powers; it could reproduce 'after its kind,' but beyond the will of its Creator it could not pass. Its functions were strictly limited. This is the

'law' we see all about us today. God's word says it was always the law! What right have we to surmise that at some remote period, some other 'law' was in operation on this earth? We are under no such compulsion, and many who so eagerly seize on such theories, do so, in my opinion, because they think they see therein a way to escape the authority of God's word!

"So here we are, shut up to the Bible explanation for life on earth at all.

"Now, Judge, if God could and did originate life in such varied forms on earth, why can we not believe that He was the direct author of the life of Christ? Kindly note this fact. The nature of a life germ is not manifest by its appearance. Learned men tell us that one life germ cannot be distinguished from another by its appearance. The true nature of a life germ is revealed alone by its faculties, its power, its potentialities.

"Do I need to illustrate this? Suppose this: Here we have a number of life germs about which there is a dispute. One asserts they belong to this, another to some other specie. Now what is the sure test? Give them a chance to germinate! Let them grow, expand, reveal themselves, and they will surely speak for themselves in a language not to be mistaken. They can perform no function not possessed by their faculties; they can exhibit no power not possessed by their nature.

"Now note this, also. No life can manifest itself except it has an environment in which to live, with which to correspond, and that is adjusted to its peculiar nature.

"In other words, there had to be a field for life to perform in, and a need for its existence, or it could not have existed. Did we but have the power of mind we would, no doubt, be able to see the 'use,' the reason for every form of life. We are daily learning more and more of the truth

of this. Life is here because there was a field for its activities and work for it to do!

"Let us apply this principle to the life of Jesus! Was there no need, no field for Him and His work? A while ago we were trying in vain to 'explain' the marvel of His life, the power that he exhibited. That the world needed Him, there was no question. That His work was not being done by any human being, you also honestly admit. No 'mere man' could do what He did and what He does.

"How shall we place this life of Jesus? By what rule shall we measure Him? If the nature of all other life germs are revealed by their abilities, why not honestly admit that the explanation of the life and work of Jesus is found in His NATURE, His INHERENT ABILITIES, just as it is in all other life forms?

"Suppose, if merely for the sake of looking at it, that you admit that Jesus was Divine. Does that not turn a new

and clarifying light on the enigma of His life, teachings and the strange influence He exerted? If He were Divine, then you can understand His bold assertions, His broad promises, His strange power. You can see why He was undismayed when seeming defeat met His efforts, when even death itself drew near. You can understand His strange calmness, His matchless wisdom, His breadth of charity, His wondrous character. If He were Divine, then disease could not resist His rebukes, blindness could not darken His light, nor death hold against His commands. If He created the worlds, the stormy winds knew the voice of their Master, and the lashing waves the presence of their Lord. The strange faith He inspired is no longer unanswered. The virility of His faith is as plain as noonday sunshine, when we come to understand that its author was the Son of God, the source of all power in heaven and earth.

"Admit, if you please, that this is merely a 'working hypothesis,' but is it not true that all truly scientific men do their real work in this way? They secure the most rational hypothesis and then give it a chance to see whether it works!

"I must insist, Judge, that true Christianity is strictly scientific and no honest seeker after the truth has any right to treat it differently from what he would treat any other important matter presented for his consideration or knowledge. While Jesus is indeed offered to your 'faith,' you are not asked to treat Him differently, nor to use your mind differently from the way you use it in any sober and rational research.

"Let us look at this thing we call 'knowledge,' see how it is acquired, and if we can determine what it really is.

"We notice that it is not all of the same nature, nor is it acquired in the same manner. Some of it is merely 'opinion,' set-

tled conviction as to this or that, the result of study, reading, thought, speculation. Much of what we call our 'knowledge' is of this sort. It is not the result of experiment nor experience.

"Another class comes to us through the testimony of others. We 'know' many things, when we merely are crediting the word of others. This is the court house sort.

"Then there is that knowledge that is the result of our own experiences. We 'know' many things that we could not give an explanation of, nor show proof for, to others. It is not of that sort; it lives too deeply in our inner being. It may have come to us by revelation, by a sudden consciousness, or through experience, but however it comes, **we know,** and this knowledge is ofttimes the very sweetest that ever comes to us.

"Now, judge, just as there are three ways of acquiring, or three sorts of

'knowledge,' so does truth itself seem to fall into three realms.

"The first is Nature. The truth connected with matter, its forms, etc., etc. This is what science deals with.

"The second is what I would call Art and Invention, or those things that man has added to the world's possessions. Man found a 'naked' world and he has 'clothed' it with his devices. He has devised, arranged, invented, constructed. Everything from the alphabet to the airplane is within this sphere. We are put to it to even try to keep up with the many devices, and understand the 'truth' as to man's myriad devices, and most of us study this more than anything else.

"Then there is that third class of 'truth' that lies in the realm of the Spirit. Those truths that appertain to the soul, its nature, needs, happiness, etc.

"That man is a Spirit you do not deny. If he is, that 'Spirit' must have its 'laws,'

you cannot deny. Man speaks glibly of the 'laws of the mind,' and results prove that he has learned some truth about them. Can we not know something of the soul's law, also. Jesus says we can.

"You know that the laws of the physical world do not have any necessary connection with the mind of man. I mean this: The ignorant savage knows nothing of the natural laws of his body, but they go on operating just the same. Their operation is not hindered by his ignorance. God's word says this is exactly the truth as to the soul and its laws.

"It was because of this, and because He was so concerned that man might know the infallible truth as to his soul's needs, dangers, etc., that God gave us the Bible. We will not take the time to look at it now, but it would be very easy indeed to show you that just as all correct hygienic teachings are based on natural law, so there is a 'natural law' reason for every

commandment in God's Word. What the hygienic laws of Moses were to the bodies of the people, just that is what the great commandments, given to men through Moses, were to the souls of men! And, just as in keeping those 'thou shalts' and 'thou shalt nots' concerning what to eat and not eat, do and not do, that ignorant mob just out of bondage in Egypt escaped all those diseases that otherwise would have strewn their bones over the desert sand during the forty years' wanderings; so would they have been saved from spiritual woes innumerable had they kept the great moral laws given for the safety of their souls.

"The Ten Commandments are simply the great hygienic laws of the soul of man! And nothing could be easier than to show you the underlying philosophy beneath each and every one of them.

"But in spite of this, in spite of the added warnings, exhortations, appeals,

man is ofttimes found in the way of error.

"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the ends thereof are the ways of death,' says God's Word. 'Be not deceived, God cannot be mocked' (ignored, His warning treated with contempt), 'for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap,' cries Paul.

"Again and again do we see these warnings in the Book, all showing us that precisely as man's mind has no necessary connection with his bodily state, that he may think himself safe while, in fact, he is in deadly danger, just so may he be on the road to spiritual death and have no conscious feeling of his true 'condition,' etc. Every day of our lives we see men of sound reason, making such mistakes as to the facts about them that they suffer and die prematurely, when had they had correct knowledge they would have escaped. Man needs Divine guidance, in matters

pertaining to his soul's life and needs. There can be no question as to that, if he would safely cross the shifting sands of life and reach the haven at last. And God has provided this very guidance! Just as there is not a single need in man's nature but that has its answer in the world about him, so is the answer to this need provided by his Creator. The answer to the old question, 'Why will ye die?' is not to be found either in God's indifference or in His lack of ability to provide life for man.

"But now, Judge, just as there seems to be at least three classes of 'truth,' so are there three ways by which we test things said to be true. We use these three ways every day in the affairs of life, and we are not asked to use our minds in any strange or unusual manner when we come to the saving of our souls.

"Those people who say man is asked to 'quit reasoning,' to act in an 'irrational, unusual manner' by the church and the

clergy who would lead them to Christ, are simply misstating the facts.

"Christianity is the one strictly scientific religion! It insists that a man follow precisely the same processes to learn its truth, that he does to learn any real truth of nature. But allow me to say here, before I go further, that no man can hope to learn the truth in any realm of knowledge if he is unwilling to make his investigations **in that realm!** You could never teach an astronomer farming if he refused to take his gaze off the heavens, and you could not teach a bookkeeper mechanics if he refused to even look at a tool or a book showing their use.

"Just so, you cannot show a man the truths of God's revelation, if he insists that he be allowed to keep his eyes on the earth, or if he refuses to even look honestly in the direction the truth, he needs, lies. All any man is asked by his Lord is that he be honest! Honest with that simple,

humble willingness to be led that he must exhibit if he learns the simplest facts in the world about him. If a man is vain enough to believe that 'there can be nothing in this,' no 'highly intelligent man can stoop to even consider this,' etc.; if he has such an attitude of mind as that toward this truth, there is no more chance for him knowing than there would be if he had that same attitude toward anything else he did not know.

"But how do we ordinarily test the truth of statements made to us, or things we do not know?

"We have three ways.

"First: There is the way of Speculation, the way of reason.

"Second: The way of Testimony, the way of the courts.

"Third: The way of Experiment, the way of common life as well as the way of science.

"Allow me to illustrate these things.

"Suppose I am traveling, and I find my path comes to a deep chasm, or rift in the earth. There is no bridge in sight, and it is too wide for me to jump. Down yonder I see a long plank spanning the chasm, and it seems to be my only way across. But the question is, 'Can I safely risk it? Will that plank sustain my weight?' Now there are three ways by which I might learn about this plank.

"First, the way of speculation, the way of the school. Let us just assume that I have this 'knowledge' and that, therefore, I am informed as to the 'breaking strength' of the various woods. I 'know' what each class is supposed to sustain, and what poundage it will resist per inch. Let us suppose, too, that I am able to compute the inches in this particular plank and I thus learn that this plank belongs to a certain wood that has a breaking strength of 25 pounds per inch, and having 24 inches

in each lineal inch, will sustain a weight of 600 pounds.

"I have thus 'learned' that this plank will hold me up, as I do not weigh 600 pounds. That is, it will, provided all my 'knowledge' is correct; provided my mental processes are accurate; provided there are no hidden knots, nor cross grained places, nor rotten spots, you see. 'Provided' a number of things, I have learned that that plank will hold my weight, BUT, with all this 'knowledge' I am not yet over that chasm! I am simply a 'learned man' on the wrong side of that hole, that's all!

"Then there is another common way by which we 'learn.'

"I come to that rift, see that plank, but this time I have neither 'knowledge' nor ability to learn in any such way what that plank is supposed to hold. But yonder are some men. I call to them: 'Friends! Will that plank hold me up?' 'Sure!' they reply. 'How do you know?' 'We all

came over on it, and several of us are heavy as you are!' they reply.

"There, you see, I have witnesses testifying to me as to that plank's strength. Witnesses! That's the way we get much of our 'information' in this world.

"You sit in court and hear the testimony of men who tell things you had no knowledge whatever about. You believe what they say, they are unimpeached, and so you come to 'know' that this or that is true. You act on that knowledge and many a time have you taken a man's freedom from him, sent him to prison, because you say, 'You did this or that, contrary to law!' Is it not true that possibly most of what we 'know' comes thus?

"Now allow me to ask you, Judge; is there a single fact in all this world that has as many 'witnesses' testifying to its verity as this one—'Jesus is the Son of God!' Did ever any truth have so much evidence of this sort to sustain it? Are

not these witnesses of as high grade, of as much intelligence, as any who ever testified concerning anything in the world?

"Have they not shown every mark required of true witnesses according to the rules of our common law, namely:

"The credit due the testimony of witnesses depends upon: First, their honesty; second, their ability; third, their number and consistency of their testimony; fourth, the conformity of their testimony with experience (here note that only those **could have** 'experience' who have given themselves the chance to have it); fifth, the coincidence of their testimony with collateral evidence.

"These are the rules Greenleaf lays down. Do not the witnesses who testify to you concerning the power of Christ in their lives meet these requirements? The shelves of your library could not hold the books needed to record the bare names of the men and women whose lives have

proved both their sanity and their uprightness, and who testify to you that they have had personal knowledge as to the supernatural power of Jesus Christ to transform men.

"You cannot account for human history, or explain many of the most remarkable facts history records, if you leave this out.

"The world has been transformed by men who had themselves been transformed by this wonderful thing, 'faith in the Deity of Christ!'

"You meet these men daily. You believe them on all other matters. You imprison, you even send men to the gallows on their testimony. Why can you not believe them when they testify of this other thing they know? Is it because you cannot believe a thing that you have not yourself personally had experience of? If so, do you apply that rule to all other things? Did you ever see a man murdered? Ever

travel around the earth, and thus prove to yourself that it is a globe? No, you do not thus apply your mental powers.

"Thousands of men have become fully convinced that Jesus was the Christ, thru the testimony of these witnesses and from their clear reasoning on the subject; and if you will pardon me, it does seem strange to me that a mind like yours, a mind that acts so rightly, that reaches such correct conclusions on the questions of life, that such a mind has not long ago seen the falsity of your position!

"It is a strange intellect to me that does not see facts worthy of consideration in Jesus of Nazareth! When I hear a man say, 'I am not interested, I care nothing about Him,' I cannot understand that type of man. I can see how an animal, without soul, without mental or moral faculties, can live to eat and play and die, unmoved by the mighty facts of God, but not a man.

"It is no surprise, therefore, that Napo-

leon, banished to St. Helena, thought much of Jesus. It is no surprise that this great mind, torn away forever from the opportunity of being exercised in governing men, should have cast about for some subject worthy of its attention, and that it should have been fixed on the Man of the Ages, Jesus Christ.

"And when such a mind thinks sanely, acts as its God created it to act, there can be but one result, but one conclusion, regardless of what the Will may afterward do.

"Speaking to his faithful friend, General Bertrand, Napoleon gave a long statement of his reasons for believing Christ to be Divine. I quote but a small part of his argument.

" 'My last argument is this: There is not a God in heaven, if a "mere man" was able to conceive and execute successfully the gigantic design of making himself the object of supreme worship or usurping the

name of God. Jesus alone dared to do this. He alone said clearly and unfalteringly of himself, "I am God"; which is quite different from saying, "I am a God," or, "there are Gods." History mentions no other individual who has appropriated to himself the title of God in the absolute sense. How then could a Jew, the particulars of whose history are better attested than that of any of his contemporaries, how should he alone, the son of a carpenter, give out all at once that he was God, the Creator of all things?'

" 'He arrogates to himself the highest adoration. He constructs His worship with His own hands; not with stones, but with men. You are amazed at the conquests of Alexander, but here is the Conqueror who appropriates to His own advantage. Who incorporates with Himself, not a nation, but the human race. And how? By a prodigy surpassing all others, he seeks the love of men, the most

difficult thing in the world to obtain. He seeks what a wise man would fain have from a few friends; in a word, the heart; this he seeks, this he absolutely requires, and He gains His object! Hence I infer His divinity.'

" 'Alexander, Caesar, Hannibal, Louis XIV, with all their genius failed here. They conquered the world and had not a friend. The founders of other religions never conceived of this mystical love, which is the essence of Christianity, and which is beautifully called charity. Hence it is that they have struck upon a rock. In every attempt to effect this thing, namely, to make himself beloved, man feels his own impotence.

" 'So this is Christ's greatest miracle. All who sincerely believe in Him, taste this wonderful, supernatural, exalted love, which is beyond the power of reason, above the ability of man; this sacred fire brought down to earth by this new Prome-

theus, and of which time, the great destroyer, can neither exhaust the force nor limit the duration. The more I think of this the more I admire it. It convinces me absolutely of the Deity of Christ.

" 'My life once shone with all the brilliance of the diadem and the throne; as the dome of the "Invalides" gilt by me, reflects the sun. But the god gradually became dim, and now all the brightness is effaced by the rain of misfortune and the outrage with which I am continually pelted. I am mere lead now, and shall soon be in my grave. Such is the fate of great men. So it was with Caesar and Alexander, so it will be with me. What wide abyss between my deep misery and the eternal kingdom of Christ, which is proclaimed, loved, adored and which is extending over all the earth! I know men, and I tell you that Jesus is not a man.'

"I wonder, Judge, why you have not

been forced by these same arguments to come to this same conclusion?

"But even this is not all the evidence God gives us that Jesus of Nazareth was His Son! The final and conclusive test is yet to be made. A test that is admitted by all men everywhere to be wholly conclusive. No matter how untenable a theory may sound; no matter how 'unreasonable' it may appear, the final test always is, DOES IT WORK?

"Let us return to my illustration of the plank and the chasm.

"Again I come to that chasm that stops my travels. This time we must admit that I have no knowledge whatever on the subject of the breaking strength of the various woods. I have no idea what this plank should hold up. Neither are there any witnesses to be seen. What am I to do? What can I do? There is one way by which I can surely find out, and that is, GET OUT ON THAT PLANK AND

SEE WHAT IT CAN DO! Desperate method? Maybe in a case like this, but, note this, when I have crossed over that chasm, I KNOW! No wise scoffer can ever convince me that that plank cannot or did not hold my weight! I was over yonder, I am now over here. I KNOW. True, I am unable to explain how the plank got its wonderful strength, or why it did not break. I can be asked many questions that I am wholly unable to answer, but one thing I DO know, IT HELD ME UP!

"Take one more illustration. I am sick, the doctor comes and says, 'You have malaria.'

" 'What is malaria, doctor?'

" 'Well, it's a bug disease. Old sister Anopheles of the 'skeeter tribe has been to see you and she left a bug in you when she departed. Now that bug has wonderful power of reproduction, and it has now produced a large family, millions of

'em, in fact, and they are working on your blood, and that causes your trouble.'

" 'Well, doctor, can the trouble be cured?"

" 'Yes, it can be cured all right, that is, by 'scientific treatment,' you understand. The remedy is quinine. It is extracted from the bark of a tree that grows down in Peru. It is deadly to the malaria bug when taken right, and this, followed up by other poisons, effects a cure.' 'Now, do you feel any better?'

" 'No, doctor, I still have that pain in my back,' I say.

" 'What, still aches!'

"Now you know, judge, that what a sick man needs is something more than 'information.' He needs a remedy that will reach the seat of his troubles!

"If a starving man should be offered food that he happened to know nothing of, that he had never seen before, but that he was told was perfectly wholesome food,

how would he best discover the truth about it? Certainly not by subjecting it to chemical analysis, to learn its component parts. That would 'inform' his mind, but it would not add much to his strength. Neither would the man be likely to derive much good from the food if he took it in his hand, and held it ever so long! The hand is not the organ of digestion, you know. But if he will allow his stomach a chance at the food, it will very soon determine whether it is digestible and good or not, and powers within him, entirely beyond his 'reason,' will take possession of that food and apply it to his need as God intended. Just so it is with some truths that we need in the spiritual realm. It is the soul that is sick, not the mind. The remedy we need is not merely a correction of our misconceptions concerning truth, right and wrong, self, God, etc., but an application of a remedy that will reach

down into the very vitals of the soul, where the disease of sin is at work.

"Jesus Christ is offered to the soul of man as a remedy for sin, and not merely to the intellect of man for his enlightenment, etc.

"The natural man, in his self-conceit, insists that all he needs is 'knowledge.' That he can do all things himself if he only knows how, and he is also of the opinion that he can find out all the 'hows,' too, if he just has time enough! Satan's first assault on man's soul was along these lines. He told Eve, 'Ye shall be as Gods, knowing,' etc., and the race seems to have been thoroughly convinced that, whatever else it might lack, it didn't lack power to do all it needed. Our conceit has caused us to think that we could understand all things, so that when there come to us things that we do not understand, we are inclined to stand back and act like they could not possibly be true. Many of the things we

'know' most thoroughly, most helpfully, we cannot and do not try to understand.

"I certainly do not 'understand' the wonderful processes that take place every day within me, but I know they do it! I do not understand digestion, assimilation, transmutation, how I retain my equilibrium, how I think, what keeps my heart going, how I hear, taste, feel, love. In fact, when I come to think of it, there are quite a good many things I find I do not understand! But I know these things are true within me! Metabolism is a 'mystery,' but it is a fact.

"So, when some wise man says to me, 'McConnell, you are foolish to believe that that dead Jew really lives, or that you are really saved by him,' I just reply, 'Maybe so; I may seem foolish to you, but I know it just the same!'

"And now, Judge, will you allow me to forget your position, your dignity, your rare attainments, and say to you just this:

'You are face to face with the acid test, not only of the truth of God's word and the facts concerning Jesus, but you are face to face with the acid test as to your own honesty!'

"You cannot escape this. If you are an honest seeker after truth; if you are not a mere quibber, haggling over words that have little meaning, if they do not lead to action; then you must honestly face the test your God has provided by which you **may know!** Hear what Jesus says:

" 'If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself' (John 7:17). 'IF ANY MAN WILL DO!' That means you!

"Judge, HAVE YOU EVER GIVEN JESUS A SQUARE DEAL?

"Did you ever give God a chance at your heart? Did you ever give Him a chance to prove to you, down deep in your

soul, that Christ was His Son? Are not the speculative, the historical evidences concerning this Jesus enough to show you that He must have been more than a mere man? Do you not think that you owe it to Him, to yourself, to the truth itself, at least to give Him a fair chance to show you if He can do so? WILL YOU GIVE JESUS A SQUARE DEAL!"

The judge was not arguing any more now. Honest men do not argue for argument's sake; and he said:

"What should I do?"

"As an honest man, surrender your heart to Him. Ask God to lead you; be willing to follow where He may lead you. Give His word the credit of meaning what it says. Believe it, act on it. If you needed an operation you would select a surgeon whom you trusted and surrender. You would not need to know; that is his part. If he knows, you do right simply to submit to him. I do not know how to

run an engine, so I simply take a seat in the train and let the engineer run it. I do not know how to digest my food, but my stomach does, so I give it the food, that is not its part, but it does its part when I give it the chance. I cannot explain to your intellect the wonderful processes of regeneration, the New Birth, but if you will open your heart to God, He will attend to that, and you can experience and enjoy that blessing. Accept the Lord Jesus and follow Him. That is what you should do. Give Jesus a square deal."

"Shall I give you some scripture? Here are but a few of many scriptures of similar import, and that are given to guide honest seekers to the Way of Life."

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thought; and let him return to the Lord and He will have mercy upon him, and unto our God, for He will abundantly pardon."

"For My thoughts are not your

thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord."

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55; 7-9.

"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, . . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matt. 11; 28-29.

"He (Jesus) came unto His own, and His own (the Jews) received Him not."

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name." John 1; 11-22.

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth con-

fession is made unto salvation."

"For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed." Romans 10; 9-13.

These and many other scriptures I gave him.

The judge did not go to the tabernacle that night, but the next night he came in and stood with others during the entire service. When I gave the call for men to come to the front who would publicly accept Jesus as their Lord and Master, he came. Several small girls had come ahead of him—and when he reached the front seat he said, "Dearies, let me sit down here with you, I feel like this is just where I belong." And the children, who all knew and loved him, gladly made room and he sat among them, accepting the same Jesus who said, "Except a man receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." (Mark 10:15.)

The next time I saw Judge Blank was

nearly ten years later.

I was to speak on their Chautauqua program, the train was late and I was rushed onto the platform and began speaking. The first person I recognized in the audience was the judge. Older now, grayer, but with a great peace in his face. His was the first hand I shook after speaking, and, as I held his hand, I asked, "Judge, how is it?" He looked me in the face, put his hand over his heart, and said, "Brother McConnell, I know that Jesus is the Son of God!"

Two years later, when holding meetings in another state, his son came into the meetings, and I asked about the judge.

"Did you not know that father was dead?" he asked.

I had not heard it and asked about his end. He said the judge was perfectly conscious to the last. After bidding good-bye and assuring them of his readiness to go, telling them how sweet it was to have a

Saviour in this hour, he gradually sank to sleep. The last words he was heard to utter were these: "I know—that—Jesus —is the Son of ——." And I believe he uttered that glad, glorious truth, "God," when he had passed from the world of faith and doubt to the world of perfect sight.

Oh, men of Oklahoma City, you hard rushed, you hard working, busy men of affairs; you men who "have little time to think" outside of your business, your profession; you men whose shoulders bear heavy burdens for those you love, whose minds are wearied with the hard problems of life; let me ask you tonight if you will not let this Jesus who loves you help carry your load? He loves you! He loves you! GIVE HIM A SQUARE DEAL!

The Lincoln McConnell

SQUARE DEAL LECTURES

Uniform Series

Who Was Jesus?

"WHY THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN"

or

"The Philosophy of the Moral Law"

"DOES MAN NEED DIVINE GUIDANCE?"

"WILL THE OLD BOOK STAND?"

or

"Has Science Destroyed the Bible?"

"THE GOLDEN KEY"

Obtainable of

Glad Tidings Publishing Co.

207 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago

or

LINCOLN McCONNELL, Thomaston, Ga.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 000 819 150 5